



May 23, 1990

Reply To
Attn Of: HW-113

Dennis M. Scott P.E., Director
Spokane County Public Works
N. 811 Jefferson Street
Spokane, Washington 99260-0180

Dear Mr. Scott:

Representatives from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), and Spokane County were invited to attend a meeting of the Colbert Landfill Citizens' Committee on April 26, 1990. Based on information gained at that meeting, it appears to us that there are a few community relations issues that need to be brought to your attention.

Under the Consent Decree, Spokane County has agreed to assist with the community relations. A revised Community Relations Plan (CRP) was reviewed by the County prior to its approval by EPA and Ecology. To implement the CRP, the County agreed to complete certain tasks. The CRP states that the County will draft a fact sheet every two months for the initial six-month period after the signing of the Consent Decree and minimum of once a quarter (every three months) thereafter. To date, EPA has not received any requests for changes in the CRP. In addition, the drafted fact sheets are to be submitted for review by EPA and Ecology prior to release under joint letterhead. The actions have not been implemented according to the CRP and, therefore, constitute a violation of the Consent Decree.

The compliance problems in the community relations portion of the Consent Decree can be broken down into two areas: the lack of timely releases of fact sheet, and failure to adequately address concerns expressed by EPA, Ecology, or the community in a timely manner. The County is currently preparing another fact sheet. The initial request for this fact sheet came from Ecology in a letter dated March 16, 1990. This Ecology letter suggested topics for inclusion in the fact sheet. On April 26, 1990, at a Colbert Landfill Citizens Action Committee meeting, EPA and Ecology were informed that the fact sheet was at the printers and no new information could be added. At that time, neither agency had any opportunity to review and comment on this fact sheet. Later, the County representative was asked not to send out the fact sheet until the agencies reviewed it. On May 2, 1990, a copy was sent to us for comment. To date, extensive editing had to be done by EPA and Ecology to include information in the fact sheet that addressed community concerns.

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This is not the first time we have experienced difficulty in getting fact sheets written, reviewed, and distributed by the County. In early November, Mr. Fowler was informed of the need for a fact sheet. The agencies were told by Mr. Fowler at that time that the County project team was "too busy" preparing project status reports to get a fact sheet written. The County was offered assistance in preparing the fact sheet, and the offer was refused. The County finally distributed this fact sheet in December after significant rewriting by EPA and Ecology.

We are requesting that Spokane County reevaluate its community relations program requirements under the Consent Decree. The County must comply with the schedules established in the CRP. We also expect that the County will incorporate comments from EPA and Ecology.

EPA and Ecology have developed the community relations program in a manner that allows for an exchange of information within the community. It is important that the program functions well. We would like to discuss your plans to address our concerns on these issues as soon as possible. Please call Mr. Neil Thompson, EPA Project Manager, or Michael Kuntz, Ecology Project Manager, of our respective staffs to set up this meeting. If you have any questions concerning this letter or other aspects of community relations activities, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Grechen Schmidt, EPA, or Teri Fisher, Ecology, Community Relations Coordinators.

Sincerely,



Carol R. Rushin, Chief
Superfund Site Management I
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



David B. Jansen, P.E., Section Head
Site Clean Up Section
Department of Ecology